

THE LABOR MARKET

In these piping times of "reconstruction" we hear a lot about "the labor market" and notice is taken by the newspapers of the fact that "the labor supply is again normal." These commercial phrases somehow have a too familiar ring. It appears that notwithstanding solemn assurances that "Labor is not a commodity or an article of commerce," they are up to their old tricks again. The saw with which we forget and slip back into well-worn grooves of habit and speech is truly appalling. But it would not be so bad if we stopped in speech alone. It is the fact that these familiar phrases as applied to labor have an evil and a sinister portent that hurts.

The Vicious Circle.

By W. R. Dinwoodie
When but a little boy was I
And joy was at my side—
When grizzly care ne'er ventured
My night.
My world about ten farms wide,
My share of wealth, a faithful dog.
Who ever at my side was found—
No beast within the chain.
Ever ventured near with him
around.
And yet with all his faithfulness
We laughed until our cheeks grew
pale.
Though it was pure ungratefulness,
When some lean flea got on his
tail.
With flashing eyes, the chase begun,
And round and round he went.
Affording us a wealth of fun
Until his very strength was spent.
Now, since I came to manhood's
realm,
And horizons have broadened
out—
With mighty problems to overwhelm.
Oft to the past I face about
To watch poor Towser's hopeless
And think of trail human's
Who plays the dog within this case
Where selfishness portrays the
flea.
As round the human circle swings
Consumer and the profiteer,
The scene back to the memory
brings
My childhood days and Towser
near.
And then in deep regretful strain,
"Forgive me, faithful dog," I wail,
"Intelligence in man's domain,
Is yours with fleas upon your tail."

Like "Slave Market."
Somehow when men speak of
"the labor market" are reminded
of "the slave market," "the
hog market," "the hog market,"
and other places, and conditions of
commercialism. There is neither
music nor poetry in such unseemly
treatment of labor. They are ap-
plied to the case, work-a-day, soul-
less exchange of material necessities.
There is little humanity or
sympathy in them. The thing that
pains us is that there is so little no-
tice taken of the entire procedure.
In spite of glib promises to labor
during the war that labor would be
his spot and his share, which is its
due, we are witnessing a return to
the antique phraseology of econo-
mics which we had reason to sup-
pose was fast becoming obsolete.
Treatment of labor as a commodity
is as flagrant as ever.

Leopard's Spots Unchanged
With the return of the "labor
market" lingo, which is the stock-
in-trade of organized capital, we
see how hypocritical were the win-
ter-war appeals of plutocracy.
Labor, the leopard, has not changed
his spots one whit. Nor has the
Ethiopian changed his skin. By
letting fall the veil of pretence with
which labor was fooled during the
war, the spokesmen of greed have
exposed the hideous form of cap-
italism in all of its naked ugliness.
Labor now begins to realize how
insincere were those dollar-a-year
patriots who promised us a better
world when the world should be
made safe for democracy. This
latest revelation, as contained in the
latest dispatches of the day to the
effect that "the labor supply is
again normal," while it may bring
joy to the heart of the exploiters of
labor, is a genuine cause for sorrow
on labor's part.

"Labor Not a Commodity"
Is labor a commodity in the
same class with beef, pork and po-
tatoes? Or isn't it? That is what
Labor wants to know. It has been
assured that "Labor is not a com-
modity or an article of commerce,"
yet the current treatment of labor
by the employing class gives the lie
to such assurances. The prevailing
unemployment, anarchy and "un-
rest" can be traced to the failure to
organize capital to keep its promise
to labor more than to anything else.
Labor has enjoyed a taste of
manhood and authority by reason
of the part which it played in the
war, and it resents the present in-
humanity and neglect which is be-
ing visited upon labor by auto-
cratic, industrial conditions. Some
means must be found to take and
keep labor out of the commodity
classification or labor will finally
lose patience and take the matter
into its own hands. Labor, the
world over is sick and tired of be-
ing governed by the law of supply
and demand and being placed in
exactly the same category as in-
animate labor products.

Labor More Than a Sheep.
Jesus Christ had the right idea
when He said to His persecutors
who asked Him if it was lawful to
remove a sheep from a pit into
which it had fallen on the Sabbath
Day: "Of how much more value is
a man than a sheep?" That is what
Labor is saying today. And it will
be heard! There is no doubt about
it. All of this talk about "the la-

bor market" and "normal labor
supply" so freely indulged in by the
thoughtless must give way to a more
dignified and humane terminology
founded upon an abundant humani-
ty and respect for the essential
divinity of all workers of whatever
nature. Not until labor is given
full partnership in industry and
treated as "one of the firm," instead
of as a "mere commodity"—not
until the dawn of the new era for
which the world was fought by a
majority of the men and women
who laid down their young lives—
not until labor is emancipated from
industrial servitude, will the world
be made safe for an enduring de-
mocracy.



The Wise Guy—No thanks! Too Busy!

Successful Plan to Combat H. C. of L.

(By F. A. Carman.)

There is one palliation of the high
cost of living which has been resorted
to on a large scale in England
and in other European countries,
but which has never been very
popular in Canada. This is co-op-
eration. There are, however, some
places where it has been practised
with success, and Sydney Mines, N.
S., is one of them.

The British-Canadian Co-operative
Society, Limited, has now com-
pleted fourteen years of operation.
Its twenty-eighth half-yearly meet-
ing was held on the 16th of Sep-
tember, when the report was re-
ceived for the half-year ending with
August 4. This report showed an
increase of nearly one-quarter in
the value of the sales for the half
year; and it showed a trade bal-
ance of \$71,140. What is regard-
ed by co-operators as more to the
point it showed a return of twelve
per cent. to members on general
purchases and ten per cent. on pur-
chases of meats. Customers of the
store who were not members of the
society received half the percentage
returned to members.

The explanation of these figures is
this: Co-operative stores are oper-
ated on borrowed capital, the cap-
ital usually being loaned by mem-
bers. On this capital a fixed rate of
interest is paid. Goods in the store
are sold, generally speaking, at cur-
rent prices, though in some instances
there are cuts in price. At the en-
d of the accounting period, half-year
or year, as the case may be, if a
profit has been earned more than

sufficient to pay the fixed rate of in-
terest on capital, it is returned to
the customers as a percentage on
their purchases. It is customary to
give members a higher percentage of
return than non-members. These
percentage payments are frequently
called "dividends on purchases," at
the British-Canadian Co-operative
they are spoken of also as "returns."
The use of the term "dividend" re-
cently caused an incident in con-
nection with the society which was
amusing, but which might not have
been. The office of the inspector of
Taxation at Ottawa got hold of one
of the statements of the society, and
jumped to the conclusion that here
was a new source of revenue. So a
statement was sent in to the co-
operative asking for the payment of
the tax on these "dividends." When
it was explained, however, that they
were not in the nature of "interest"
on investments, but were merely a
refund of part of the purchase price
to customers of the store, the claim
for taxes was withdrawn and the
principle of co-operation escaped a
serious blow at one of its vital
measures.

The secretary of the British-Canadian
Co-operative Society is Mr. W. C. Stewart,
and he is a sturdy co-operator. In
his view co-operation is "the only
thing that will reduce the high cost
of living." The returns on purchases
are, he pointed out, a direct reduc-
tion in that cost. A number of the
society, as he put it, "can live
equally as well as anywhere else
and have the dividend to their credit."
Mr. Stewart was asked his opinion
as to why co-operation had not
taken hold in Canada as it has in
England and Scotland. He put it down to
the desire to "get rich quick." He ex-
pressed the view that the time has
come when it will not be easy to
make a fortune quickly, and that
people would begin to settle down.
These conditions would make for the
popularity of co-operation.

"The labor movement is growing,"
he said, "and co-operation is grow-
ing. I think the time is ripe for co-
operation."
Regarding the general business
outlook, Mr. Stewart said: "This is
a time to be careful. Slack times
in the United States and in Great
Britain will affect us eventually. I
have seen it come before."
The British-Canadian Co-operative
Society was started by seven mem-
bers. It was begun with a capital
of \$248; today it has \$186,686 of
this amount \$111,673 is share cap-
ital, and \$74,459 is loans. No mem-
ber is allowed to hold more than
five shares of capital, although
members holding that amount are
allowed to subscribe to the society
loans. The share capital is with-
drawable at the option of the mem-
bers, and there have been withdrawals;
but in spite of the fact that the
members were free to draw out their
capital, the capital has grown until
it has reached the present figure.

The "property account" of the
society is worthy of attention. It
includes six separate pieces of prop-
erty, live and rotting stock, fixtures
and bakery equipment. The total
cost has been \$67,448; it is carried
in the accounts at \$24,465; and there
are no mortgages upon it.
While the British-Canadian Soci-
ety has had a prosperous history, as
the figures quoted indicate, it is not
so well known as it should be. It may
be a co-operative store in fact, as
straight selling. There is, in fact,
an example to the contrary in the
neighboring town of Glace Bay.
There the co-operative store has
not been a success, and has just re-
cently been taken over by the Brit-
ish-Canadian. The reason given for
Mr. Stewart for the failure at Glace
Bay is that the society there did not
remain "true to Rochdale," the
model of all co-operatives. It may
be that the store at Glace Bay which
failed had "fixed" capital; while the
store at Sydney Mines which suc-
ceeded had "withdrawable" capital.
This was one of the points on which
Glance Bay departed from Rochdale.

THE TROUBLE IN A NUT SHELL.
(Sunday Pictorial, London, Eng.)
The Canadian Government is
anxious to convince us that it really
does want British emigrants of the
right kind in spite of the unfor-
tunate nature of some recent regis-
trations. Mr. Robert J. C. Stead,
the writer of Wild Western novels,
has just arrived in London on a
special mission from the Immigra-
tion Department at Ottawa. Al-
most every rural district in Canada
is calling out for labor. The trouble
is that immigrants who are sent
to Rock to the cities.

BRITISH LABOR LEADER ON PRESENT SITUATION.

Interviewed by a representative
of a Prague newspaper, Mr. J. H.
Thomas expressed the following
opinion on various British and in-
ternational questions of the moment
(says Reuters):—
The Communist element in Great
Britain was unimportant.
Ireland will probably get Domini-
on Home Rule.

Labor was inadequately rep-
resented in Parliament, but would
shortly be admitted to take part
in the government of the country.
The mines and railways would be
nationalized, but compensation
would be given to the owners.
The "Little Entente" (of small
Central Europe States) was a good
thing if it was intended to prevent
war.
Not only Soviet Russia but also
Polish imperialism was a European
danger.

The best means of raising the
value of the crown coin would be
an international loan.
The miners' strike in Great Brit-
ain was of a purely economic
character.

NEED OF SAFETY IN INDUSTRY
The State Industrial Commission
has issued startling statistics on
deaths of workers engaged in build-
ing construction. It is shown that
there are four times more workers
employed in factories than in build-
ing, but during the four years from
October, 1916, more fatalities oc-
curred in building construction.
Of the 1,441 fatalities during this
period, 445 were due to falling, and
of this number 154 deaths resulted
from scaffolds and 29 from ladders.
The Industrial Commission has
prepared a new building code de-
signed to standardize construction
apparatus, and to reduce the num-
ber of preventable accidents. The
commission was assisted by repre-
sentatives of contractors, workers,
engineers, inspectors, insurance
companies and manufacturers.

UNEMPLOYED IN BRITAIN.
"The problem of unemployment
is daily growing more acute," writes
the labor editor of Reynolds' News-
paper.
"Not only in dockland, but
throughout the whole of industrial
England an alarming situation has
developed during the past two
months. It is safe to say that such
a percentage of out-of-works has
not been reached since pre-war
days."
Many schemes calculated to re-
lieve the distress have been formu-
lated by borough councils, but ex-
cept in very few cases has any real
attempt been made to cope with
the problem. In and around the
docks the pinch of poverty is being
felt more and more.

THE B. R. T. SWITCHMAN.
When the fierce winds of winter
Blow piercing and cold;
When the frost King swoops down
Like some demon of old;
When the mercury is dropping
To forty below;
And the whole earth is buried
In a six feet of snow;
Just slip on your furs
And walk down in the yard.
And you'll find there the switchman
With a B. R. T. card.

When the hot sun in August
Is burning the earth;
When electric "breeze makers"
Are proving their worth;
When the ice-man is chuckling
And counting his gains;
When so hot out of doors
Gives your eyeballs a pain;
Then down in the yards
In the scorching heat,
There's a B. R. T. switchman
Patrolling his beat.

When the chill rains of autumn
Are drenching the ground,
And the most of the "public"
By fireplaces are found;
When the hall and the sleat
Cut the face like a knife,
And you fear to go out
Lest you shorten your life;
When it's storming the hardest
Walk down to the yard,
And you'll find there the switchman
With a B. R. T. card.
—(W. H. Stober, Spokane, Lodge
No. 387.)

By demanding the union label be-
fore the help of the breadwin-
ner, her powerful influence being
thus extended from the home to the
workshop, from which she is other-
wise totally excluded.

Is Your Home Safe?

Every year there are hundreds
of citizens badly scalded by boiling
water, and year by year the appal-
ling total of children scalded to
death grows. Put all hot liquids
out of reach of the babies.
Gasoline fumes will explode when
exposed to flames. Gasoline should
not be kept in the house and always
keep it away from fire. If you think
you must use coal oil to start the
fire use a small cup and stand
clear of the rash of flame.
Matches are a horrible fascination
for children. Hundreds of fires
have resulted from children playing
with matches and many young lives
have been suddenly snuffed out—
because someone was careless with
matches.

Someone has said "An upturned
nail is a prod of evil." Broken
glass and boards with nails in
them. Blood-poisoning and serious
infections can often be the result of
stepping on a nail or broken glass.
Keep all poisons out of reach of
the children. Put a piece of tin in
the cork of the bottle so you will
know a poison bottle is even in the
dark. If you can do not keep any
poisons in the house.

Statistics show that falls are re-
sponsible for more accidents and
deaths than any other cause in the
home. Keep your stairs, especially
the cellar steps, clear of boxes,
bottles and other material. Keep
the steps in good repair. Keep
dark halls free from obstructions
that might trip someone. Train the
children to put toys away instead
of leaving them lying on the floor.
Nearly all of the cases of infec-
tion and blood-poisoning are caused
by the neglect of small injuries. If
you scratch or cut yourself use
iodine to kill any possible infection.
Iodine is clean and efficient.
Are the children of the community
the responsibility of the fathers
and mothers. Parents are morally
obligated to make their homes
safe and to teach safety to the
children.

TO AUTUMN.

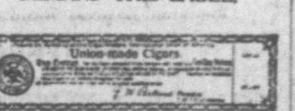
I stand alone, beneath the midnight
arch,
And see the gems that robe Eternity:
Hear the vast murmur of the dan-
tant sea;
The echoes whisper from the slum-
bering larch;
The sounds of ghostly hoys upon
the march;
The tumult of the wind upon the
lea;
Reeling the aim with wild caeo-
phony;
The sound of myriad autumn leaves
that parch.
Earth crumbles at the working of
decay.
For Time has trod upon that rocky
road.
And breathed the first chill blast of
leaves night.
Scattered like seed a few fair flakes
of white
Roused the bright blooms of every
flashing ray.
And stirred the cypress of her
heavy lead.
—WILLIAM WARRIS.

"And if society were once free of
militarism and grinding poverty,
what a difference on the earth!"
—Anthony Hope.



Constipation
It is never necessary to take strong
—calomel or harsh cathartics to relieve
constipation. Try a combination of
simple laxative with acid, sold by drug
gists under the name of Dr. Caldwell's
Laxative Syrup Pepsin. It is a mild,
fruit medicine to take that loosens
of mothers give it to tiny babies, and
yet it is effective enough to relieve the most
chronic constipation in grownups. The
formula is on the package. A sixty-
cent bottle lasts an average family many
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well's Laxative Syrup Pepsin free of
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